

Transcript of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm Interview on CNN's Lou Dobbs August 15, 2007

PILGRIM: Faced with the highest unemployment rate in the country, the governor of Michigan is taking action. Now, the governor has launched a new program called No Worker Left Behind.

And Bill Tucker explains what the program aims to accomplish.

(BEGIN VIDEO TAPE)

BILL TUCKER, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Michigan is reeling under the loss of manufacturing jobs and struggling to keep companies from leaving the state. Unemployment is higher in the Wolverine State than in any other state in the nation. But it doesn't mean that there's not work.

GOV. JENNIFER GRANHOLM (D), MICHIGAN: We have 90,000 vacancies in Michigan, many of them in areas that require certification or training. We want to give this as an opportunity to put that whole cadre of workers who have been displaced a chance for a second career, a second shot at life and training.

TUCKER: To do that, the governor has created a program she calls No Worker Left Behind.

The goal?

To train 100,000 workers over the next three years. The program will pay for two years of tuition at a community college or a technical school, up to \$10,000. For a worker to qualify, they must be 18 years or older, out of high school for at least two years, unemployed or have recently received a layoff notice, or in a family where the joint income is less than \$40,000.

To fund the program, Michigan is taking federal money provided for job retraining for displaced workers under the North American Free Trade Agreement and combining it with money from the state.

But Michigan's budget is under strain and, as a result, there are critics of the program.

The head of Michigan's Republican Party says: "It doesn't make any sense to train Michigan residents for jobs that don't exist, only to prepare them to leave our state and find jobs elsewhere. Why train workers in Michigan for jobs in Indiana?," he wonders.

The governor responds to that by noting that the program is not training for phantom jobs, but working with employers who need workers.

GRANHOLM: We have needs right now for the kinds of skills that can't be outsourced. You can't outsource nursing. You can't outsource being an auto mechanic. Some of those service positions you have to do right here and that's what this is about.

TUCKER: The governor emphasizes this is a one time deal, one which she hopes can serve as a model for other states.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

TUCKER: And, as evidence of the early success of the program, Governor Granholm points to Caraco Pharmaceutical Labs. This is a generic drug maker who recently announced it would stay and expand its presence in the state, create 600 new jobs. That decision made after the state promised that it would train those newly needed workers under the No Worker Left Behind program.

And I've got to tell you, Kitty, these jobs pay \$48,000 a year. So this is not, you know, an empty promise for low paying jobs.

PILGRIM: These are solid jobs. Bill, you know, you talked about some of the service sectors, like nursing, that you can't really outsource those jobs.

TUCKER: Right.

PILGRIM: But, you know, the big sticking point in this country is high tech.

What's the position on high tech?

Are they doing anything to help that?

TUCKER: It's, you know, this is a program that's not really aimed the technology sector and the governor will admit that. She and I talked about that a little bit today. But they do have -- part of the program is aimed at creating some alternative fuel programs, which the state is actively involved in. And they're hoping that they can train workers to go to work in industries in that area.

PILGRIM: In that area.

OK.

Thanks very much.

Bill Tucker.

TUCKER: Thank you.